

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 8, 9 and 11-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Tuma, U.S. 2002/0089781 and claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Tuma, U.S. 2002/0089781. Claims 4-7 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were otherwise indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Allowable claim 4 included the limitation of a "microporous membrane disposed over the inlet port" and allowable claim 7 included the limitation of a "microporous membrane disposed over the outlet port." As recognized in the Office Action, the limitation of a microporous membrane disposed over either the inlet port or outlet port does not appear in the prior art of record. Claim 1 has therefore been amended to include the limitation of "a microporous membrane disposed over at least one of the inlet port and the outlet port." Because independent claim 1 has been amended to reflect the same scope as in previously allowed dependent claims 4 and 7, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Claims 2-5 and 7-12 depend from claim 1 and therefore include the same limitation and are allowable for the same reasons discussed above.

Independent claims 13, 14, and 16 have been amended to include the limitation of "a microporous membrane disposed over at least one of the inlet port and the outlet port." Again, for the same reasons discussed above, this limitation is not present in the prior art. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 13, 14, and 16, and claims 15 and 17-18 that depend therefrom, are in condition for allowance.

SUMMARY

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims as all rejections have been overcome. Early notice of allowability is kindly requested.

If it would facilitate prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's representative by telephone at 612-746.4783 or by E-mail at dpauly@pdsdlaw.com with any questions or comments.

Application No.: 10/750,530
Amendment and Response

Please grant any extension of time, if necessary for entry of this paper, and charge any fee due for such extension or any other fee required in connection with this paper to Deposit Account No. 50-3688.

Respectfully submitted,

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